AN ACCOUNT

rom the Children of ght, (to them that askes) in everal particulars, why we have been kept from joyning to, or worshipping in, those formes at Law, and formes of worships, that have *been imposed upon us against our consciences, in these late years, for denying whereof, we have so deeply suffered, with our lives, Liberties, and Estates.*

so what we owne, as to those ings, and can be obedient to for Conscience sake, according to truth, and the practise of the Church of Christ, and the Scriptures.

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r our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience; That in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdome, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, 2 Cor. 1. 12.

LONDON;

inted for *Thomas Simmons*, at the *Bull* and *Mouth* neare *Aldersgate*. 1660.

For as much as many
desired to know th
particulars, of our
in faith and wors
God, And in some thing
the outward formes at Law,
which men have sought to
impose upon us in these late
yeares; and also what we
would desire therein; there-
fore is this written following,
towards the satisfying of eve-
ry honest desire, who loves the
kingdome of Christ.

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WITHOUT E.C.

THere is no kingdome nor people can truely be said to be the Lords and his Christs, but as they come to be guided and governed by the Law of his Spirit in their Consciences, which Spirit and *anoynting* all must wait for, even from the King that sits on high, to the least place of government in any people, That with it all may know *Judgement*, and to doe *Justice*, which is of God, and not of men, That he may be known, to be the *anoynting of Kings*, *and to Judge among the Judges*, whose right it is of old, and God hath given it to him by an everlasting generation, even after the power

1 *John* 3.27.

Isa. 5. 6.
2 *Chro.* 19.6

and order of an *endleſſe life*, That in him and in his ſeed may nations and kingdoms be bleſſed with peace, even through and in his *Righteous government*; for God the Father accepts neither perſons, lawes, nor governments, how prudently ſoever they be made, if they be not in him, and from him, and for him; becauſe for him, was made all ſoules that move, not onely in earth, but in heaven alſo; All ſignes, and ſeaſons, types and ſhadows, worſhip and ſabbath was made for him the *ſon of man*, And no fleſh breathing, nor Spirits neither, men or Angels hath any true power or right, but as they receive it in him, and ſo uſe it to him, and for him, over any of theſe things *viſible* or *inviſible*, to rule, force, or order, no not over his own body, but by uſurpation; and for the time that he, or they, ſhall hold that power, and not in him, as aforeſaid, they ſhall be under the curſe of God, not eſtabliſhed in peace and righteouſneſſe, but in tyranny and oppreſſion; with force, or with flattery, muſt ſuch rule in their day, untill their meaſure of time, and ſin, be fulfilled, In which the vengeance of the Almighty ſhall remove them far away, onely their names ſhall remain as a curſe to thoſe that come after. Thus God will plead the Cauſe of his own ſeed, and overturne, and ſhake nations and kingdoms, *untill the earth know that the heavens muſt Reigne*, and the ſtout of heart confeſs *that the head of every man is Chriſt*, And that God hath made this *ſame Jeſus* (which men hath rejected) both *Lord & Chriſt*, which in his time he ſhall ſhew to be the *onely Potentate, King of Kings, and Lord*

Iſa. 6. 9.

Mat. 12. 8.

Heb. 2. 10.

Dan. 4. 25.

Acts 2. 36.

Lord of Lords, who onely hath *immortality dwelling in the light*, where he ſits at the right hand of power till God ſhall make all his foes his footſtoole. 1 *Tim.*6.15.

Now this is that we wait for in every appearance and face of authoritie that comes up, to wit, the face of Jeſus our righteous King and Saviour, in whom is no violence, nor oppreſſion, who when he comes to rule, we know will be tender of the tender in Conſcience, and meeke towards the poore in Spirit, and *with righteouſneſſe will he judge, and rule on the earth*, to deliver the helpleſſe from him that is too hard for him, who will drive wickedneſſe from his throne, and the workers thereof into a Corner, but will gently deale towards all that travails with righteouſneſſe, and put *the Lambs of truth* in his boſome, for *he loves righteouſneſſe, and hates iniquity*, therefore hath God called him *his anoynted*, and will give him *the heathen for his poſſeſſion*, and a Prieſt to God he is to all generations, in his dayes ſhall *the upright rejoyce*, for he ſhall walke ſafely in his uprightneſſe; no nett ſhall then be ſpread on the mountaines, neither ſhall he that turnes from iniquitie be made a prey, for under him ſhall every one ſerve his God *without feare, in holineſſe of life*, and godlineſſe of converſation. *Isa.* 11. 4. *Isa.* 40. 11. *Pſal.* 45. 7. *Jer.*23.5,6. *Luk.* 1. 24.

Now this is he we wait for, even the beloved of our ſoules, and we know *his birth is come to the nations*, and his morning towards the people, yea to the wiſe in heart, who are yet aſar off, hath his ſtarre appeared; And we know his breaking forth to theſe Ilands as the *bright Sun* after the ſtormy raine, even ſo *Isa.* 6. 3. 2 *Sam.*23.4

shall he be after the shakeings, *he shall be a Covert from the tempest*, as rivers of waters in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, even so shall he be, *who shall raigne in righteousnesse*, and by whom *Princes shall rule in Judgement*; This is the *Royall seed*, and he that is of him is the *son of Nobles*, his Princes eate in due season, for strength, and not for drunkennesse; thus shall the Land be blessed, who is found worthy to receive *the anoynted of God* to rule in its borders.

Isa. 32. 1, 2. *Eccles.* 10. 16, 17.

And this is he whom we have preached to all the severall governments that hath risen ever since God revealed him in us, and the glory and peace of his kingdome; and we have patiently waited, and in great sufferings hath our soules travelled, to see if by any meanes, we might see, any worthy to receive *his anoynting*, and to be borne of his Spirit, to governe by his *power*, and with his Counsell to order, and be ordered, that through him they might be established of God, and we have looked through the vail of flesh in all sorts of people, and could not bow thereto, and by many contrary Spirits have we been evill entreated, because we could not owne *them*, for *him*, whose kingdome we seeke, in rulers, teachers and people.

And thus have we gone seeking the righteous one, through Parliaments and Protectors (so called) Priests and Rulers, of all sorts, but his government we have not found, nor with his righteous Judgements have we been judged among them, but we have been shamefully entreated *for his sake*, and have borne his reproach, because of *his Spirit in us*, and

Psal. 69. 9. *Lam.* 3. 14.

and his kingdome *in our Consciences*; And many times have been tryed to the losse of estates, and lives, to see if they could provoke or drive us from his faith in our Consciences, or tempt us any way to deny him, and owne them in their wills; And though we have dayly suffered thus under every severall power, and people, yet have we not ceased to warne them in love, with much feare and plainnesse, that if by any meanes they might have received his testimony, and not have perished in their gainsaying; for our God in whom we trusted shewed it to us, that they should not prosper, nor be established without him, his Spirit, and anoynting, to whom he hath given the government of all people, that shall be blessed by him, yea, *all the nations, of them that are saved must walke in his light*, and receive his counsel, for their stability, and his resurrection for their glory, and his anoynting for the strength of their kingdomes. *Rev.* 21. 24

And this is the Cause why we have chused rather to suffer under every power that yet hath risen, then to joyne in with them, because we have not heard the voyce of the *holy one* in the midst of them, neither hath his Spirit in them been the strength of their Counsells, but they have sought to make *flesh their arme*, and to strengthen their kingdome *with flattery and deceit*, and not with *truth*, and they have sought to make themselves dreadfull by violence, and to rule with cruelty, and not with the sword of God, which is Judgement and Justice; and have sought *honour from men*, and not from the Lord, and *Isa.* 5. 21. *Jer.* 17. 5. *John* 5. 44.

their Covering hath been *vaine glory*, and not
Isa. 30. 1. *the Spirit of God*; So with the light of Christ we saw their foundation, and their building, and that they could not stand long in Gods sight, and that all that joyned to them must fall with them, and that the woes that are written of such must certainly overtake them.

And this is the Cause, and no other thing why we have hitherto borne our testimony against them all, even because they would not joyne to the Lord, nor heare his voyce in their day, but the more he called after them by the mouth of his servants, the more they were hardned, and the more provoked him to their own confusion; so it hath not been prejudice to any mans person that hath kept us at a distance from them or their commands, for we can truely say we have waited without prejudice, if by any meanes we could but have seene any of them seeking the kingdome of God, that therein they might have been established, yea we have the witnesse of truth in us to this day, how glad our soules have been before the Lord, when we have but felt the least tenderneſse in any of them, arising from the Spirit of Jesus, or the least confession from his light in them.

And sometimes we have felt some tenderneſse in some of them when they have been low, little, and in feare, in which we have had some hope and gladneſse to heare the voyce of *simplicity and truth*, (though but brokenly) so that we could then have said they was *not far from the kingdome of God*; But turning away the eare from the Spirit of truth in them,

them, and conſulting with fleſhly wiſdome and carnall reaſon likely to make wiſe, and to accompliſh their ſelfe ends, how ſoone hath truth fallen in them, and blindneſſe, and hardneſſe of heart come over them againe worſe then before, which being ſhewed us of God, we could not but deny them alſo to be of God.

Thus in generall, an account is given to you that askes a reaſon, why we have not yet owned any power that yet hath riſen, ſo as to joyne to them in all things. Now to you who deſire to know in what particulars we have differed from theſe governments that yet hath riſen ſince we was a people; we might ſay our lives, practiſes, and ſufferings hath openly declared it, through the moſt parts of theſe nations, and in moſt, and greateſt of our differences; Yet for the better ſatisfying of ſome that knows not ſo much as others, and to take away all occaſion of offence, from all that would not oppoſe the way of truth if they knew it, and to leave without excuſe the wilfully ignorant, and perſecuters of the good old way of Chriſt; I ſhall inſtance in ſome things, and alſo ſhew our warrant for ſo doing, both by Scripture, and the practiſe of the holy men of God, in their generation; It being that ſo many are yet ignorant and unbeleeving, concerning the preſent leadings of the Spirit of truth *in them*, which is chiefe leader, and *corner ſtone* in us, by which we walke towards God, and towards men, in all theſe things. *Rom.* 8. 14. *Gal.* 5. 18.

And as to that firſt. Though God hath laid it upon us as matter of Conſcience, to be ſubject

ject to what outward government or governers soever he shall set up over us, in outward things; and also that with all willingnesse of mind a ready subjection be rendered, at every *just command*, not for fear onely, but even for Conscience sake; and that in all things, we should seek the safety, and honour, and well-being of such governers, to the utmost of our power, even as we looke to account to God for it, of whom the powers that be, are ordained; yet hath he begotten us unto himselfe alone, and to the leadings of his own Spirit in all things concerning faith and worship, as to matter, manner, time and place; This is to be done and performed singly as to him, in the *leadings of Jesus*, and in the power of his Spirit alone, else will he have no regard thereto; And for this purpose hath he given the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, to be our light and understanding and leader in all these things; to which leadings and movings the father requires obedience *in all things*, upon eternall condemnation in matters pertaining to our consciences; That must be the throne of Christ alone, and there will he sway the Scepter of eternall life, and answer his people in all things, and be their Saviour, guide, and lawgiver, in all things that are just and holy.

Mat. 17. 5.

2 *Cor.* 10. 6.

So that if at any time their teachers have left the way of life, and would lead people after them, yet hath he through faith and a tender Conscience, preserved a seed out of error to himselfe in such a day, by which he hath reproved and made manifest the folly of such teachers; And to this the Scriptures doe fully

lly teſtifie, as in the dayes of the Prophets, hen they *erred in viſion*, and had not *the* *Iſa.* 28. 7. *rd in them*, and ſo cauſed the people *to erre* *Jere.* 23. *rough their lyes, and through their lightneſſe*, *Amos* 2. 4. en had he men of enlightned Conſciences, ſend to reprove their brutiſhneſſe, though herwiſe they themſelves was neither Pro-hets nor ſons of Prophets, but may be, a *eardman*, or a gatherer of *ſiccomore fruite*, a *Amos* 7. 14. owman, or a ſhepheard, or ſome ſuch, hich *Englands* pride would call mecannick llows, yet in theſe was the ſeed preſerved, *Jerem.* 23. lſe the Land might have become as *Sodom*, *Iſa.* 1. 9. nd not one have known the Lord nor his ord. And as it was in the dayes of the falſe rophets, ſo hath it been ſince the dayes of he falſe miniſtry, for which many have ſuffe-ed ſince the dayes of the Apoſtles, for teſtify-ng againſt ſuch as have *erred in Spirit, forme, nd doctrine*, from Chriſt Jeſus and his Apo-les; And this hath been from the *indwelling* ower of Chriſt in them, and his precious ight ſhining in their hearts and conſciences, hat they have thus been preſerved, and en-bled, to beare the teſtimony of Chriſt againſt falſe worſhips, and worſhippers; and ſo it is t this day, in all who keepe a pure Conſci-ence towards God in all his word and wor-ſhip, that his true and ſpirituall worſhip might not be wholly loſt out of the world.

Alſo if at any time their Kings or Rulers forgot God, or Kings aroſe who knew not God, and then would lay upon them Laws and Commands, which was not juſt and lawfull for them to doe, then by *the light of Chriſt* in a pure Conſcience they was enabled to with-

ject to what outward government or governers soever he shall set up over us, in outward things; and also that with all willingnesse of mind a ready subjection be rendered, at every *just command*, not for fear onely, but even for Conscience sake; and that in all things, we should seek the safety, and honour, and well-being of such governers, to the utmost of our power, even as we looke to account to God for it, of whom the powers that be, are ordained; yet hath he begotten us unto himselfe alone, and to the leadings of his own Spirit in all things concerning faith and worship, as to matter, manner, time and place; This is to be done and performed singly as to him, in the *leadings of Jesus*, and in the power of his Spirit alone, else will he have no regard thereto; And for this purpose hath he given the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, to be our light and understanding and leader in all these things; to which leadings and movings the father requires obedience *in all things*, upon eternall condemnation in matters pertaining to our consciences; That must be the throne of Christ alone, and there will he sway the Scepter of eternall life, and answer his people in all things, and be their Saviour, guide, and lawgiver, in all things that are just and holy.

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Iſa. 28. 7. *Jere.* 23. *Amos* 2. 4. *Amos* 7. 14. *Jerem.* 23. *Iſa.* 1. 9.

Alſo if at any time their Kings or Rulers forgot God, or Kings aroſe who knew not God, and then would lay upon them Laws and Commands, which was not juſt and lawfull for them to doe, then by *the light of Chriſt* in a pure Conſcience they was enabled to with-

Hester 3. withstand it even unto death; As that of *Mordecai* and the Jews, who would rather all be destroyed then bow to *Hammons* pride at the Kings command, though *Englands* people would have said this is but *a civill thing, and duty, and good manners*, and the like, *yet Gods Law* in their Conscience they preferred above all that the King commanded contrary thereto, yea life and all would they lose rather then defile their Conscience towards God, or deny his Law there, though no Law without had forbidden such a thing; Yet in other cases did they appeare true and subject to the King, for *Mordecai's* truth saved the Kings life, not long before, though from man he had little reward for it.

Likewise might be Instanced, that of *Daniels* praying contrary to the decrees of the
Dan. 6. King, his Counsell of *Presidents and Princes*,
Dan. 3. and that of the *three children* against the fierce Command of *Nebuchadnezzar*, in denying to worship at his will and pleasure; likewise
Acts 5. 28, that of the Apostles, when their Rulers and
29. Priests also, charged them straitly not to preach any more, their answer before authoritie was, *we ought to obey God rather then men*; yea it would be too long to tell how many godly men and women, upon the account of a pure Conscience, not onely hazarded their lives, but lost life and all, for the testimony of a tender Conscience, as might be instanced. But this may be said for all; That if they would but have denyed the law of God in their conscience, and conformed to the wills of men, and their laws, not one of all the Prophets, Apostles, or all the holy men of God need

ced to have ſuffered death or ſpoyle.
So now in that any of us by the ſame ſpirit of Chriſt, and from his light and law in our Conſciences, are moved to goe teſtifie againſt falſe Prophets, falſe worſhips, and declare the way of truth to all people againſt them to their face; And if Rulers have been ſo oppoſite to this as to make laws againſt it, and to command us to bow and worſhip at their wills, which for Conſcience ſake towards God we could not, for which we have ſuffered the ſpoyling of goods, long and heavie imprisonments, ſhamefull uſings, and loſſe of lives alſo; I ſay in this we have *a cloud of witneſſes*, even the *Lord Jeſus* our Captaine, and the whole body of Martyrs, who have all gone before us in the ſelfe ſame obedience of faith and Spirit, and have ſuffered the ſame or ſuch like things from Rulers that knew not God, and teachers that knew not God, in their dayes; and all of them in their dayes was counted offenders, hereticks. or diſpiſers of Authority. or ſome ſuch reproach. was caſt upon them by their accuſers and perſecuters, for obeying the law of their God in their Conſciences, whom the Rulers *of the darkneſſe of this world have not known*, nor can know, till they beleeve his light in their own Conſciences. *John* 16. 2, 3.

So it is not for new things, nor ſtrange opinions, which was never in the world before, for which we ſuffer, (though to the world they ſeeme new and ſtrange, but for the very ſame workes, of the ſame Spirit of light and truth, which hath often appeared in a poore contemptible people, and hath as often

often received the same measure, from them who professe him in words, but in workes deny him; by such have we suffered, who read and preach the same in words, which this eternall Spirit in us now worketh; And with such who with words *garnish the sepulchres* of those whom their fathers slew, are we counted great offenders, for being found in the same way and practise, and in obedience to the same Spirit, in that measure as we have received it; So we have this added to the testimony of a good Conscience towards God, and towards men, *that we suffer not for evill doing, though as evill doers*, (to wit) the practise of holy men, and the Scriptures of truth, which will owne us herein, and stand on our parts against all our adversaries and accusers. And this will be proved so when we come to particulars, wherein we differ from the wayes and worships, of these present times, and for which we are so much hated and persecuted.

And we know that it will not be found harmfull to the bodyes, estates, or well-being of any Christian neighbourhood, nor of any other people in the nations, to practise those things wherein we differ, in civill and temporall things, nor hurtful to the soules of any. In the things wherein we differ in religious or spirituall matters, from the severall opinions, and formes of worships that are or have been set up in these nations; As we shall make it plainly appeare, if either Spirit of truth, or Scripture of truth, or things equall may but be received on our part. Now we shall mention some particulars in which we differ

for

for Conſcience ſake from ſome of the formes traditions. and commands of the men of this preſent age and the powers that have ruled therein. under whom we have therefore ſuffered, as evill doers.

And firſt as to thoſe things which ſome calls civill.

AND indeed it may be wondered at. by any moderate people that in a nation called Chriſtians any man ſhould ſuffer, ſo much as to be called an offender for ſome of the things which I muſt mention upon this account, eſpecially they being layd upon us by the ſpirit of Chriſt as matter of conſcience, and by a people ſo highly pretending for liberty of Conſcience.

As it hath been layd upon us by the Spirit of Chriſt, to uſe the ſame ſingle language to all ſorts of people, which the Scriptures uſes, and all the holy men of God therein have ever uſed, that is to ſay, *thou* to any one perſon, and *you* to more then one; A language, ſound, and true, to God, and man, which the Spirit of God firſt ſpoke, and gave to man, and of man received it againe without offence, and never ſince gave to man any other forme of ſpeech, as we may read in the Scriptures of truth; And in this we differ from ſome ſorts of people, and for it have ſuffered as great offenders, and have undergone very grievous cenſures, and long impriſonments, divers of us, though it hath been layd

on

on our Consciences from the Lord, yea the
2 Tim. 1. 13. Scriptures also, commands the *forme of sound words*, to be holden fast; now why those who professe the Scriptures for their rule, should persecute us for using the language of it, may be thought strange to the hearers thereof; yet for this we suffer for a testimony against them.

Also it hath been layd upon us by the Lord to call men and women by their own names, which their fathers have given to them, to be knowne by amongst men; And though in this we differ from some sorts of people, who can give flattering titles to some people in stead of their names, and reproachfully miscall others in stead of their names, yet herein we are owned by the Scriptures of truth, and the practise of all the holy men therein, who never refused their own names to take a proud title, but owned their names that God had given them, And saith the Scriptures,
Job 32. 21, 22. *let me not give flattering titles to man, for in so doing my maker would soone take me away. And if*
James 2. *you respect persons, you commit sin, and are convinced of the law as evill doers*; yet for this we have suffered also by this generation, as evill doers, and contemners of authoritie, though we know that to call a man by his name, contemnes not his authoritie, nor doe we it for that end, but in obedience to truth, and for Conscience towards God.

Also that about our *hats* putting off, which hath been so great an offence to many; This also hath been layd upon our Consciences by the Lord and we dare not disobey him therein to please men, though sometimes it hath been

been ſaid to us that if we would but put off our hats, we ſhould not goe to priſon; others have ſaid, when we came before them for Judgement and Juſtice, *you ſhall have no Juſtice, unleſſe you put off your hats*; yea ſome have hazarded their lives hereon, yet durſt not diſobey God herein, though they have ſuffered long therefore; and loſt their rights for want of juſtice: yet we have not dared to diſobey our God herein, but have valued our peace with him and a pure Conſcience above all ſufferings and profits herein. Now, this is beyond all the perſecuters of old, that men ſhould ſuffer for their *hats*, yea, even *Nebuchadnezzar* in his greateſt heate of perſecution he made not that an offence, to keepe on their *hats*, more then their other garments, but with their *hats* on as well as hoſe and ſhooes, they was bound and caſt into the fire; nor doe we finde in all the Scriptures precept or practiſe of that thing yet for this we have deeply ſuffered, in divers parts of this nation. Thus would people and powers, drive us from the obedience of our God, in a pure Conſcience, and inſtead thereof cauſe us to worſhip a vaine Cuſtome, for which we have no warrant, neither in Scripture, nor good example, but ſaith the Lord, *Ye ſhall keepe mine ordinances, but the Cuſtomes of the people are vaine, and abominable, you ſhall not defile your ſelves therewith.* So, we obey God rather then men, and by men who profeſſes God, ſuffer for ſo doing.

Dan. 3. 21.

Lev. 18. 30.

This alſo hath been commanded us of the Lord, and layd upon our Conſciences, not to *ſweare at all*, upon any occaſion whatſoever,

Ier. 23. 10.

and becauſe of this we have forborne to ſweare, when men have called us thereto, whether to ſweare at any change of government, or what ever it hath been, we may not *ſweare* at all; And for this we have deeply ſuffered alſo, as cõtemners of the law, though we have not deſpiſed government, but have conſented to what juſt thing was required of us, in truth of heart, without ſwearing; And for this we have the expreſſe command of Chriſt Jeſus who hath ſaid. *Sweare not at all*; And his Apoſtles ſaid, *Above all things my brethren, ſweare not, leaſt you fall into condemnation.* And we have alſo the practiſe of all the followers of Chriſt who was never knowne to uſe an oath ſince; for to ſuch as receive Chriſt there is the end of ſwearing; and divers other things which before Chriſt came to end them, was ordinances of God, but Chriſt the Covenant everlaſting hath ended all ſwearings of men whatſoever, and forbidden they are in his name, upon paine of condemnation. Further, in the time of *Moſes*, when ſwearing was in the Iews Church, it was not to be forced upon them by any penalty, but they might ſweare or not ſweare, without any carnall puniſhment, nor was it required of witneſſes to ſweare at all, betwixt a man and his neighbour, two witneſſes was to eſtabliſh the matter before the Iudge, but I never read of thoſe two required to ſweare, that was as to a mans owne particular, onely in this caſe, when a man had taken a pledge, and it was ſtolen from him, then an oath was to be taken of that man in his owne behalfe, that he put not his hand to the ſtealeing of it,

Mat. 5. 34.
Iames 5. 12.

and

and then he was not to repay it againe, but if he would repay it he needed not ſweare, ſo he was not forced. And except in this caſe onely, I finde not an oath required by any Iudge in *Moſes* law. So, theſe who make us offenders, for denying to ſweare, are out of all the way of God in *Moſes* time. And in Chriſts time, ſwearing is expreſsly forbidden at all, even this in *Moſes* time; for ſaith Chriſt *It hath been ſaid by them of old time, thou ſhalt not forſweare thy ſelfe, but ſhalt performe unto the Lord thy oaths.* So here was *Moſes* time, and ſwearing to the Lord, commanded in truth: and this ſaid *Moſes*. But (ſaith Chriſt) I ſay *Sweare not at all*, and this is greater then *Moſes*, whoſe time is without end.

Lev. 19. 12. *Mat.* 5. 34.

Further, as to the adminiſtration of the Laws of theſe nations in theſe late yeares, there we have ſeene many things, which in our Conſcience we cannot joyne to, being ſhewed to us to be out of truth, and equity, and not helps, but burthens to the nations; Now as to our ſelves, ſo many as walke in Chriſt Ieſus, we have one Judge, and Law-giver appointed to us for that end by the father; And we may not goe to Law one with another, as men being come to Chriſt Ieſus, the end of luſt, pride, and ſtriſe, which we have found to be the Cauſe of fightings, and ſutes at Law, and if any thing of that nature would ariſe in any of us, by our Iudge and Law-giver it is judged, and we are ſaved; And it is layd upon us by the ſame Spirit of Chriſt, not to *ſue any man at the Law*, nor to ſeeke to avenge our ſelves of ſuch as ſeeke to wrong us, but to love our enemies, and pray

Mat. 5.

for them that dispitefully use us, and hate us; And so from all men to suffer for peace sake, for to peace we are called, towards all men, and under the Prince of peace is our government, so that we need not men to end Controversies amongst us, who are all in unity of spirit, and life, in Christ Iesus.

But when men haile us before Iudgement-Seats, or cause us to appeare at their Courts of Law, then we meet with many things among them there, which for Conscience sake we cannot bow to, nor uphold, finding them, not onely against the rule of Christians, but, out of the way of common honesty as men, yea many things against truth it selfe, and this we cannot serve, as Law, which is against truth.

As when they send a Writ to appeare at their Courts, in a mans owne proper person, and in obedience thereto we have come, (may be) two hundred miles or above, and tendred our appearance accordingly, at the very day appointed, then they have with violence and reproach thrust us out of their Courts, because we did appeare in our owne persons, and not in another mans person, whom we have not known, and for this have we suffered much damage, & long imprisonment, as contemners of authority and Law; Now, this we cannot joyne to in our hearts, nor owne as honesty, and truth, and plaine dealing as men, to let goe, all talke of Christians, the heathen would not doe this to us.

Also, when our adversary puts up a Bill of Charge against us, drawn up in a forme without truth, fill'd with false accusations, as though

though our offence amounted to hundreds or thouſands of pounds wrong, or damage, when with the truth of Chriſt in our Conſcience we know, that we have never wronged that man one penny in our lives, but that it is the enemy of truth, and peace, even that Old accuſer of the brethren, which now workes in that Creature to ſpoyle our goods or take our lives, or liberties from us; Then, we are not ſuffered to returne an anſwer in the feare of our God, and in plainneſſe and truth of expreſſions, as the Spirit of truth ſhall move in the ſimplicity of our hearts; And ſo, with the Spirit of truth to deny the lyes and falſe accuſations, of the adverſary; But we muſt be forced to give unreaſonable ſums of money, to another man, whom we know not, nor knows he our ſtate and caſe in this matter, to anſwer in our ſtead, who for ought we know, may in ſtead of ſharply reproving thoſe abominable lyes, juſtifie them, at leaſt as a legall thing, or forme at Law, fit to be uſed. And thus our teſtimony againſt falſhood is taken from us, which the Spirit of truth requires of us, and we pay money to have it juſtified, as a forme at Law, when we know it to be a forme of lyes; And we cannot leave the truth, to ſerve this deceipt; beſide, were the truth no dearer to us, but that we could thus give it up to be betrayed knowingly, yet it ſeems to us unreaſonable, as men, to give our cauſe into the hands of him that knows it not, further then we muſt informe him, nor when we have informed him, have no aſſurance whether he will ſpeak our words or his owne, or our adverſaries,

Iſa. 59. 4. *Iſa.* 28. 15. *Jer.* 9. 3, 4, 5 *Pro.* 12. 19. 22. *Pro.* 29. 12.

and so bring us under the guilt of the whole body of falshood. This appeares to us very unreasonable, and dangerous, and below the priviledge of a man, as a man, much more as a Christian, so we rather chuse to suffer innocently under falshood, keeping our consciences cleare, then consent thereto, and so establish mischiefe under pretence of a Law, *Psal.* 94. 20. and deny our testimony for the truth, to which we are called, and for which we suffer in all these things.

Psal. 40. 4.

Also, if any of us be sued at the *Exchequer* or *Chancery*, and appeare and take a Coppie of the Bill, and goe to the Iudges with a true answer thereto, they will refuse it, because we cannot sweare, though they will shew us no written law for so doing, but tell us its a Custome, and this custome is preferred above his Law who saith, *sweare not at all*; and for this have many been imprisoned, it being put upon us either to deny their Custome, or Christs Command, so we chuse to suffer by men, for a season, rather then defile our Consciences.

If we be summon'd to doe service for the Country, on a Iury, and be willing to do the service faithfully as to God and man, yet because we cannot sweare, many are fined, imprisoned, and their goods spoyled, and reputed unserviceable in the nation, when we would freely serve the Country, so as we might not therein deny Christ, our Saviour.

If one of us be summon'd to appeare at a Court for a witnesse, that would testifie the truth before God from a good Conscience, and in the feare of God, and according to his Law, *viz.* in all things, that if we should

Deut. 19. 16 17, 18, 19, 20

wrong

wrong any man whatſoever through our falſe teſtimony, that its juſt the ſame ſhould be done to us, yet becauſe we cannot ſweare, (be the action never ſo great,) our true teſtimony is refuſed, and we thruſt away without Iudgement, & threaten'd to cauſe us to pay, what they ſay the party is damnified for our not ſwearing, and all this we muſt ſuffer for obeying Chriſts Commands.

If one of us ſhould buy a piece of land, or have ſome fallen to him by inheritance, and come to the *Court Baron* to take it up, they will not let him take it, except he *ſweare*, and ſo breake Chriſts ſayings; or if a man purchaſe, or have an inheritance within a Cuſtomary Court, its the ſame, and they will turne us without it, if we will not ſweare contrary to Chriſts Commands. And thus is the evill Cuſtome of a Court preferred before Chriſts Commands, a good Conſcience, and a familyes whole eſtate and livelihood.

If a man bind an apprentice in this Citie of *London*, and give a great ſumme of money with him, and the prentice ſerves his time honeſtly and truely, and have his Maſters teſtimony thereto, yet is he denyed his freedome, if he cannot ſweare for Conſcience ſake, and ſo muſt loſe money and ſervice, if he be faithfull to Chriſt.

If one of us ſhould dye inteſtate, they will not ſuffer our owne wife or Children to adminiſter on our owne goods. unleſſe they will *ſweare* againſt their Conſcience, and the Law of Chriſt; or if we make a will, and make wife or Children Executer, they are denyed to prove the will, whereby they are to enjoy

their eſtates, but by breaking that Command of Chriſt in ſwearing.

Likewiſe, when ſome of us have been arreſted to appeare at ſuch a Court ſuch a day, and have ſimply given bond to appeare; And when the appearance hath been made at the day expreſſed by the party ſo bound, neither the appearance would be taken, nor the bond delivered, but a further ſnare, becauſe another man appeares not for us whom we never knew, nor had ought to doe withall.

Alſo about marriage, which we know to be an ordinance of God from the beginning, and being ordered in the Counſell of God, and the bed not defiled is honourable, *but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* So as any are moved of the Lord into that ſtate, we ſay the Counſell of the Lord is firſt and chiefely to be minded, and the thing weighed in his feare, that it be done onely in the
1 Cor. 7. 39. Lord, that it be not taken on lightly, raſhly, nor by any fleſhly motion, nor for any earthly ends, but in the moving & ordering of the Almighty Creator of man and woman, who onely knows their ſpirits. So to joyne them, as they may be one in fleſh and ſpirit, that he may ſeeke a godly ſeed to himſelfe, and they may lead a godly and peaceable life; & onely
Mala. 2. 15. thus is it Gods ordinance, as God puts toge-
Matth. 19. 6. ther, and ſaith Chriſt, let not man put ſuch aſunder; and this we ſay is the chiefe thing to be obſerved, *viz.* that God joyne them; And next that notice be given to the parents, or ſuch as have the overſight of each party, that (as much as may be) all may be done in love and unity in the will of God openly. And

this

this we have from God in Spirit, and this we find in Scripture, to be the ordinance of God to his Saints of old, and their libertie in the Lord; which God never altered, which we keepe for conſcience ſake, and may not breake. And leaſt any licentious perſons ſhould abuſe this liberty, to ſatisfie their luſts, and then not live as man and wife during their lives, and the Magiſtrates not know of them, and ſo they eſcape the ſword of juſtice; we have freedome in our Spirits, to acquaint ſome of the next Majeſtrates with our intents, and hereby confeſſe our ſelves lyable to the juſt cenſure of the Magiſtrate, with others, in caſe of miſdemeanour, and all this we have done ere coming together as man and wife, which is as much as the ordinance of God, or any reaſon can juſtly require, yet have ſome of us ſuffered in this caſe, by the changable Laws of men, who ſome of them have ſought to impoſe one ſort of Prieſts on us as an ordinance, others Juſtices as an ordinance, and others another ſort of Prieſts againe; ſo for denying theſe uncertain rules of men, and keeping the ordinance of God that was in the beginning, we ſuffer by all of them as evill doers, yet have they not one charge againſt any of us, who have been joyned according to this ordinance of God, as to breach of marriage, or miſdemeanour therein: for we hate putting away, and come to that which was in the beginning. *Math.* 19. 8. *Math.* 19. 4, 5.

Theſe with many other things there be, as touching the outward Laws, whereby both our lives, liberties, and eſtates, become a daily prey to mercileſſe men, from which hath

hath been manifeſt ſuch impriſoning til death, ſuch perſecution and ſpoyle of goods, as many generations to come may admire to read of, though in this generation its little regarded or minded, unleſs it be by ſome few, whoſe hearts God hath tendred, that have not been ſo cruell in their places as others.

Now let none ſay, that becauſe we cannot bow to ſuch unrighteous dealings of corrupt men, or their corrupt Cuſtomes, or corrupt Lawes, That therefore we are a people that would have no Law, nor Magiſtracy at all, as ſome have falſely accuſed us: for of this we are cleare before the Lord our God, what ever men may accuſe us herein, for the Law of God we own in our Conſcience, even *the Law of the Spirit of Life, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord and Law-giver*, by which we are taught, to keepe our Conſciences voyde of offence towards God and towards men, by which we are freed from under the power
Rom. 8. 2. of the *Law of ſin and death.* And by this Law of God in our conſciences, are we alſo taught to be ſubject to every power our God ſhall ſet up over us, by which teaching we know that the powers that be, are ordained of God. And by the ſame Law of God in our hearts and Conſciences, by which we are made to ſuffer, rather then to obey that which is unjuſt, by the ſame Law, and upon the ſame penalty are we made to be ſubject and obey every juſt and wholeſome Law of man, for Conſcience ſake; Therefore, as the ordinance of God, we obey, and owne authoritie in the Nation; And the Ruler of the people as the
Rom. 13. Miniſter of God, for good to ſuch as doe well,

but

but a terror to every evill doer without respect of persons; so we being guided by the pure Law of God in our consciences, are subject *not for wrath, but for Conscience sake*; for he is not a terror to them that do well, and obey God in their Consciences; But if any doe evill, let such feare, *for he is the Minister of God, and beares not the sword in vaine.* And for this cause we pay tribute, to whom it belongs, and feare to whom feare, honour to whom honour; And from this we exempt not our selves, more then other people in the same Nation, but desire rather to be examples to others, with all diligence, not speaking evill of governments as many doe, which will flatter to their faces, but seeking to our God for what authoritie he shall ordaine, that under them we may be godly and quietly governed, without respect of persons.

Therefore we might say, as to all the severall Rulers that hath arisen in these yeares since we were a people in Gods light, which of them have we reviled or sought to supplant, or what just law, old or new? (which hath been just, and according to Scriptures, or a good Conscience) have we denyed or transgressed? though from the evill and abuse of all, God hath by his eternall light, and the power of his Spirit, preserved us to this day, glory to our God for evermore; So our Consciences are cleare towards them that are fallen as to that thing, by whom we so much suffered in their day.

And now in Gods dread and feare we are, and in his pure Counsell alone, we desire to be found towards you that are now come up into

into the ſeat of government, That if by any meanes, we might not be any occaſion of offence, or hardening of your hearts, by our diſobedience or denying any of your Laws, which are juſt, wholeſome and good, and according to Gods truth in Scriptures: Nor, that on the contrary we might provoke our pure eyed, and zealous God and Father, to diſpleaſure againſt us, by yeelding to any thing whatſoever, or obeying what is any way againſt his Spirit in our hearts, or the light of Chriſt in our Conſciences. And this at preſent is our ſtraite way, ſet before us to walke in towards God, and towards man, and therefore the deſire and travaile of our ſoules is great at this day, that you might be one with God in your Laws and Commands, That ſo, under you we might be godly and quietly governed, within and without. But if yet, it muſt be ſo, that your diſtance be ſo great, that with one heart we cannot obey you both, then whether it is better to obey God or men, (with the light of God in your own conſciences) judge you, therefore if we can but keepe peace with the one of you, we chuſe to keepe our everlaſting peace with God, and that ſaving faith thats held in a pure Conſcience; And our prayers to the father of lights is, for our whole body of Chriſts Church, and every member thereof, that our hearts may be kept ſingle to him alone, what ever we ſuffer from men for ſo doing.

Acts 4. 19.

2 *Cor.* 1. 12.

1 *Tim.* 3. 9.

Now

Now to thoſe things which ſome call religious.

THough in our ſelves we make no ſuch diſtinction, it being that our Conſciences are to be exerciſed in the light and Spirit of Chriſt, in all we doe towards God, and towards man, and every particular action towards men, God requires that it be done as to him, and to his glory, and not in our own wills, nor in mens wills, nor after their wills, manners, and cuſtomes, and commands, but in the will of God alone, revealed in Chriſt Jeſus in Spirit, and in his motion and leadings, which if we miſſe in, and ſerve eyther men or our ſelves therein, and not God, we are accountable to him, as though we had erred in that which the world calls Religion; therefore, what ever we do to God in Chriſt, to us, is his ſervice and pure religion, and undefiled before God, if we keepe but our conſcience unſpotted from the world; though it be but in viſiting a fatherleſs childe, or a widdow, in their affliction, or any other thing which the Spirit of truth, juſtice and mercy leads us to, and requires of us. *James* 1.27.

But, as the worſhip of God it ſelfe, hath relation to him alone, who is a Spirit, and will be worſhipped in ſpirit, and in truth, betwixt him and every particular creature onely known, in matter, meaſure and manner, time and place. And knowing that the onely wiſe God, who gives the kingdoms of the earth to whom he will, yea, and may ſet over them the baſeſt of men, as well as the moſt vertuous, *John* 4. 23, 24. *Dan.* 4. 17.

ous, without controule, if he pleaſe ſo to deale in judgement towards any Nation, yet this hath he reſerved as an eternall Scepter in the hand of Jeſus our Lord, and by an everlaſting Covenant hath he ſworne once
Heb. 1. 8,9. for all, concerning him, *Thou art a King for ever, over the holy people*, and his throne is eſtabliſhed in their conſciences by a perpetuall decree, to all generations, therefore was it never known, that ever he truſted or titled any earthly Prince, *with Lord over the faith and conſciences of his owne people*; This was ever the *Sons* prerogative above the Kings of the earth, and he alone is to be Judge and
Iſa. 11. 1, 2. Law-giver, and corrector, and leader, in that inviſible ſpirituall work of worſhip, towards God, for he onely knowes the way, *and none comes to the Father but by him.*

Its true, the *Pope* hath taken upon himſelfe, ſuch authority under pretence of the Apoſtles, even over the faith and conſciences of people, and with it hath ſhed much innocent bloud, which lyes upon his ſeat, and his line, till God come to enquire for it, and for that end hath ſet up inquiſitions &c. And others after, and from that, have erected Courts, and Synods, with their fines, and priſons, and tortures, to force the faith and Conſciences of people, and they pretend the Apoſtles alſo, for this worke. But, this we know that the Apoſtles was no ſuch men, nor uſed any ſuch weapons, but deny them therein both the *Pope*, and they that are riſen ſince; And expreſſely deny to be Lords over Gods heritage or over their faith, neither did they preach themſelves Lords, and Maſters, but

Chriſt

Christ Jesus alone *the Lord*, and themselves servants for Iesus sake, as both their owne words & practise doth testifie; for saith *Paul*, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith*; And saith *Peter*, *Not for filthy lucre, neither as being Lords over Gods heritage, but as examples to the flock.* 2 *Cor.* 4. 5. 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. 1 *Pet.* 5. 3.

So we know that from *Peter* they had it not, nor from *Paul*, nor from any of the true Ministers of Christ, for their weapons was not carnall but spirituall, nor did they wrestle with flesh, but with spirit; so all they can get from the Apostles, either in word or practise, is this, That if they be troubled with errors, or profaneneſse in their Churches; Then, if they have the Spirit and power of the Lord Iesus, then to deliver such a one up to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the soule may be saved, and body also in the day of the Lord. And this is not to goales, or gallowes, or inquisitions, or tortures, or fires; now, had they this spirit and power, they would know that which would convert in deed and truth, and not make hypocrites, or else kill them, but the false Church having not these weapons, nor this spirit and power, is builded with oppression, and upholden with bloud. And in her are found the bloud of all the holy Martyrs of Jesus, as saith the Scriptures, yea, even now is she drunke with bloud, *Revel.* 18. 24. *&* 17. 6. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *Eph.* 6. 12. 1 *Cor.* 4. 5. *Mic.* 3. 10.

So now, this is the thing we say as to the worship of our God, and to the order of it; In all things it belongs to Christ Iesus our Lord, and to him as sole King & Lord thereof, we cōmit our selves, even the whole man, soule *Col.* 1. 18.

ſoule and body, as to all things of that nature: And though there may ariſe power after power, and ſeeke to ſtop us of this liberty and freedome, by acting force and violence upon our outward man, yet are we free, by birth in Chriſt Ieſus, and our inward man they cannot bind, nor can we ever while we abide in that ſeede, give up the right of Chriſt unto any of them; but this we teſtifie in all we doe
Phil. 2. 10. or ſuffer, *that the right is Chriſts, over our Conſciences, and over our worſhips*, and to him alone we confeſſe before men; and he hath the name in us; And though for a time, or times, we yet ſuffer, yet we know the end muſt come; And
Rev. 17. 14. the Lambe muſt take the kingdome, and we know him that is true and faithfull, whom the
John 6. 27. Father hath ſealed, and anoynted to *be head*
Col. 1. 18. *of the Church which is his body*, and to him muſt the Nations account; And therefore we ſay to all the ſeverall powers that comes upon us, we may not deny the Lord in our Conſciences, to bow to, or worſhip in what men
Mat. 1. 21. ſhall ſet up or command; but he that ſaves us dayly from our ſins. he ſhall leade us in our worſhip, and to him we muſt give the obedience of faith, who gives us faith and power by his Spirit to obey, and who hath wrought
Phil. 2. 13. all our workes *in us and for us*, and by whoſe vertue it is we live. and bring forth to the praiſe of God, and we are not our owne, nor
1 *Cor.* 6. 10. ſervants of men but we are bought with a price. that we may ſerve him for ever. by whom we are redeemed. and by whom all men without reſpect of perſons, muſt eternally be judged, or juſtified.

Therefore

Therefore we say, this is a priviledge, that no man should be hindered of, (to wit) the liberty of his Conscience towards his God, but that an universall liberty for all sorts of people, to worship God, according as Christ shall open mens eyes to see the truth, and as he shall perswade their hearts, by his Spirit, seeing no man without Christ can doe any thing in this case acceptable to God, neither can one man worship in the measure of another, but in his owne measure, as he receives of God in Christ Jesus faith and strength, and Spirit, for it must be in Spirit, and of faith, else it is sin, in Gods sight, what ever men thinke thereof. *Rom.* 14. 23

And this is just and equall in the sight of God, and all reasonable men, and that which I know no understanding man or woman would be limitted in, seeing all have immortall soules from God, and to him alone must account for them, and not to men; That so every soule may stand and fall, to his owne Master in this case, seeing none can save his brother, when he hath misled him, nor account to God for him; therefore he is no wise man (in our eyes) who will leave the light of Christ that once knows it, to follow another mans opinion; And seeing every man would have this libertie for himselfe, why should he goe about to deny it to his brother, how is that just or equall, amongst men? And how doth it answer the Law of Christ as Christians, who hath commanded, That all things *whatsoever you would that men should doe unto you, doe ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*; Now if you *Rom.* 14. 4. *Mat.* 7. 12.

be not come so far in equitie, as to answer the Law and the Prophets how will you answer Christ, you that professe him in words.

And were it not that Nations, and men were drunke, and bewitched with the fornication of that Scarlet coloured whore, they would foresee the danger of taking that upon them which belongs to Christ alone, it being so many have been broken on the same Rock, and reason it selfe might shew them how safe it is, not to be too forward in things of that nature, which God hath not called them to; And also it being so much contrary to that just principle in man which would lead every man to do to another as he would be done unto; And would teach every man that he ought to give up himselfe to his God, in all spirituall matters; And that so he should suffer every other creature also; And seeing that there is no infallibilitie amongst men, without the immediate manifestation of *Christ Jesus his light and Spirit in them*, but that since men tooke that upon them, even to sit as Lords and Judges over faith and conscience; The Lord hath scattered them in this thing, and confounded them into so many minds and judgements, that he that is subject to follow every change in these latter dayes, shall scarcely abide in one opinion a yeare to an end; which things duely weighed, might stay the hast of every reasonable man from forceing that upon the Conscience of another, which himselfe is not infallible in, and for which he must account to God for all soules that erre through him, and so perish, in gainsaying Gods witnesse.

1 Cor. 2. 10, 11.

And

And this would be wiſdome, with God, firſt to ſearch in themſelves whether they have that Call from God himſelfe, to force any, or they doe it to anſwer the deſires of others, or to hold up a tradition, and ſo might they come to ſee, what they ſerves, and whether it will beare perſecution or bloud-ſhedding at the day of Judgement; And prove whether you have that which is infallible to force them to, or it be but thought, and opinion of your ſelves, or others, ſeeing its ſo common a thing for Rulers and Teachers to joyne in forceing people that are under them to erre, and for which ſo many have been confounded and caſt out, and ſo that all might come to prove their worke, and bring it to the light, to ſee whether it be wrought in God, and if he will owne it with his light, which is pure in their Conſcience, which is an equall rule, and try what power and Spirit it is that God hath made Lord & King, and Law-giver and Leader in all his worſhip; and if they have not this, then it is the old perſecuter, and murtherer, which uſes to ſet people on fire that know not God in Spirit; And if you have that Spirit which God hath given the power to in his Church, then its gentle, drawing and powerfull, without forceable impoſing, or killing, nor doth he ever compell againſt faith and Conſcience. *John* 3.20, 21.

Now there be many particular things as to Gods worſhip and things thereto pertaining, which the men of this age would impoſe upon us, yea, and force them upon great penalties, which the Spirit of Chriſt doth not

lay upon us as matters of faith or practise, nor ever did ordaine them in any age, nor command them to be observed in his Church, as men now impose them, but the contrary we find from the Spirit of Christ, both in the
Rom. 7. 6. oldness of letter, and in newness of life; So these things we cannot bow to, nor worship in, for conscience sake, conscience towards God conscience towards the holy men of God in the holy life, and conscience towards the Scripture of truth; for of all these we make conscience, in their time and place, in which God the Father of all hath brought them forth to serve him.

As men would impose upon our Consciences *to come once a weeke, to such a great house in their Parish*, which they call a *parish Church*, and there we must observe what one man shall reade, preach or pray, for two or three houres that day, by an usuall forme, and this man will have a *Clarke*, and he shall say *Amen* at the end of such a sentence, or part of his prayer or speech, and to this Church, and to this worship must we be bound while we dwell in that parish; And either the tythes of all we have, or so much a yeare set maintenance, must be payd to the man calling himselfe a Minister of Christ; And so much a yeare to his *Clarke* for saying *Amen* after him, in money and egges, and the like; And if this we doe constantly, we may live peaceably by them, and goe under the name of a good Christian, and a religious man, but if we faile in any of this, but especially in that of tythes or wages; then they call us heretickes, and complaine of us to the Magi-

strate,

ſtrate, or ſue us at Law, till they have caſt our bodyes into priſons, and taken the ſpoyle of our goods. Now God having revealed his true worſhip to us in the light of Chriſt, which is is in ſpirit and truth, and called us out of carnall things, for which there is no Scripture, we cannot for Conſcience ſake, worſhip any more therein.

Now, neyther by the Spirit of Chriſt in us, nor by letter of Scriptures without us, nor by the example of all the holy men of God that have walked before us, can we for Conſcience ſake owne, nor uphold that for the true and ſpirituall worſhip of God in ſpirit and truth, neither to repaire their houſe, maintaine their Prieſt, nor his Clarke, as they would impoſe upon us.

Now ſome have ſaid, *What would you have no Church, Miniſter, preaching, praying, nor none of this worſhip, nor maintenance, &c. What would you have?*

We ſay yes, we own a Church, miniſtring, preaching, praying, and the maintenance that thereto belongs, but we would have them to be of God, and after his will in Chriſt Jeſus, and not after the will and traditions of men, contrary both to God, good men and the Scriptures of truth; For we reade of a Church of Chriſt in Scriptures, but it was *in God the Father, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And we read of a miniſtry of Chriſt in Scripture, *made not of man, neither by man, but by the revelation of the Son of God in them*; And the Goſpel or Miniſtry that they preached, was not *after man, nor received of man, neither was they taught it, but by revelation of Jeſus*

1 Theſ. 1. 1.

Gal. 1. 16. Gal. 1. 11. 12.

Jesu Christ. And we read of a Maintenance they had, which was to live of the Gospel; And the spirituall which they sowed freely without money or money-worth, brought them forth fruits freely, both in spirituall things, and worship towards God, and in carnall things towards their outward wants, and as they planted, so they eate; And where the plant grew, and the soule prospered, till it could bring forth fruit freely, there they need not to sue them and to take it by spoyle, but of the world they looked for nought but persecution, nor ever coveted or compelled any such thing from any creature, no not where they had sowne and planted, unlesse it grew in spirit and life to God, they looked not to reape any thing but losse, if that which they had sowne withered in the way, therefore did they watch for the soule, and not for tythes, piggs, and eggs and geese, and sheaves, &c. but that the soule prospered towards God, that was their prize: And to make the Gospel without charge, that was their reward, if they did it freely and willingly, but if not willingly, then *a necessitie was layd upon them, and woe was their portion.*

1 Cor. 9. 14.

1 Cor. 9. 17, 18.

And these went on and prospered, gathering Churches out of the world into God, from place to place, even where they was not sent for; they went freely as they was moved of the holy Spirit: And if any where they came was found worthy to receive them, with them they might eate freely what was set before them, where the Spirit was free, but they did not seat themselves in a

Towne,

Towne, or say, this is my Parish, and this is my hire, so much a yeare; but wandred to and fro having no certaine dwelling place, nor was their bellyes any part of the bargain, as to coming preaching, staying or going, as to any place.

And when they had gathered a Church into the Spirit and life of Christ Iesus, which brought them to meete together, then they did not Lord it over them in faith or conscience, neither was they called their Masters, but still *servants for Christ sake*; nor did they 2 *Cor.* 4. 5.
get a glasse and set up, and if any spoke in their time, while they was speaking, say they broke their peace, and send them to prison, but said *all might prophesie, that all might be edified*; and it was joy to them to heare any to speake by the Spirit, either son or daughter and some might speake and some might judge of what was spoken; And if any thing was *revealed* to him that stood by, 1 *Cor.* 14. 29
the first was to hold his peace; and *the Spi-* 30, 31.
rit of the Prophets is subject to the Prophets. Now this Church and its order we owne. where ever we find it to be after God, and in him; but when we meete with a company of people that denyes all this; And if any be moved in the Spirit eyther to speake while they are speaking, or judge what they have spoken; Then the teacher cryes away to prison with him, and the people runs upon us all a heapes, ready to pull us to pieces; this we owne not, nor doth Christ, nor the Scriptures owne it to be his Church, this is not the Spirit of the Prophets, nor subject to the Prophets, but the rude Spirit which tu-

multed upon the Apoſtles and Prophets of old.

So here is ſomewhat declared of the miniſtry we owne, and his maintenance, but of ſuch a thing as a *Clarke* we read not in Scriptures, neither name nor office. And now let none thinke it ſtrange or an error in us, to compare & weigh and try and prove things, for we are chriſtians, & have received the ſpirit that is of God, that we may know the things
1 *Cor.*2. 12. that are given to us of God, from things that are of the world; And we may not receive every one for a Miniſter of Chriſt, who tells us he is, nor that for a Church that every one calls a Church, nor that for worſhip which every one would impoſe upon us; for things had need of trying, and Spirits alſo, and we
1 *John* 4. 1. *hold faſt that which is good.* Its true in the
1 *Theſ.*5.21. world there be many Churches, and many
1 *Cor.*8.5,6. heads, Gods many, and Lords many, many faiths, and many opinions, but in Chriſt Ieſus we are called to unity in all theſe things, ſo that we ſay with the Churches of Chriſt in Scripture, to us there is *one body, one Spirit,*
*Eph.*4. 4.5, 6. *one Lord, one faith, one baptiſme, one God and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.* And this one God in us is a Spirit, and will be worſhipped in ſpirit, & in truth, ſo of us he requires truth, and that we worſhip no other things, nor bow to them; though all men have not this faith but can follow any thing in their worſhip, which is the faſhion of the Nation where they live, but this we are called out of; And into that one worſhip we are come which is in ſpirit and truth, for in that is the father worſhipped, and God

hath

hath ſought us out of the many worſhips that are in the world, in Spirit to worſhip him; and Chriſt ſaith, theſe are the true worſhippers that ſo worſhip, and into this hath Chriſt led us, and in it he ownes us in his Spirit, and the Father ownes us, and teſtifies to us in every enlightned conſcience, and in this we are come to the Spirits of juſt men, and they owne us; And the letter of Scriptures it ownes us alſo, and in this we have peace, though perſecuted.

But in all theſe, we read not in all the Goſpel worſhip, of any *Temple made with hands*, to bind men to, nor Pariſh Churches, nor preaching by the houre, nor for ſo much a yeare, nor that ever Miniſter of Chriſt tooke tyths, nor their hearers gave them, but confeſſed Chriſt come, and a free Goſpel, and ſaid both the Prieſthood that tooke tyths, and the Law by which they received them was diſannulled by the ſufferings of Chriſt; nor doe we read of *ſprinkling Infants*, and calling that baptizing them *into the Church*, nor doe we read of their ſinging *Davids* words in a meeter, nor praying in a forme, nor a *Clarke* to lead the Pſalme, and ſay *Amen*; And much more we might mention, which was never uſed ſo in the true Church, but is come to a forme ſince Popery came up, & the Scripture beares no teſtimony thereto, as now theſe things are uſed, and all that can be truely ſaid for them is long cuſtom, but from plain Scriptures they cannot prove them. *Heb.* 7.

Indeed we read in the Scriptures of truth, of the Goſpel preaching, but it was not limitted to one houſe, nor by a glaſſe, but from houſe

houſe to houſe, and Citie to Citie, and that by the Spirit, and their worſhip was in Spirit, they prayed with the Spirit, and they ſung with the Spirit, and he that had a Pſalme ſung it with the Spirit, and with underſtanding alſo; And they worſhipped, and preached in fields and mountains, and ſtreets, & ſchooles, and markets, and they prayed by Sea-ſhores, or in any place where God moved and led them by the Spirit of Ieſus; And all this we owne which the Scriptures teſtifies to, in our meaſure: And this is that we would have all brought to tryall, and that worſhip owned, which Chriſt and the Scriptures ownes, and none forced againſt it, by any meanes whatſoever, which is come up ſince the Scriptures was written, and the Apoſtles times.

And this motion, is not unreaſonable, hurtfull or dangerous to any, eſpecially (we may ſay) in this Nation, how can it be denyed, wherein all other formes in words profeſſe the Scriptures to be a rule for all to walk by? And to you all this is our motion, that the Scriptures may be heard what it ſaith without wreſting, and what ſort of worſhip it teſtifies of, let that have the name to be of God, and then let none be forced from it; and if you deny to be tryed in your faith and profeſſion, by that you have ſo long called your rule and touchſtone, and then reproach and perſecute them that walke in it, will not your own words judge you, before men, and ſhall not you walke under condemnation from God in your owne Conſciences. And thus in ſhort have we ſhewed our deſires, and what we would have in this thing, which might

free

free every tender Conſcience from oppreſſion, and the Magiſtrates of the Nations from the guilt thereof before God.

Will you call your ſelves Chriſtian Magiſtrates, and Chriſtian Miniſters, and ſet your ſelves againſt what Chriſt hath wrought by the power of his Spirit, and is now working, and thinke you are doing him ſervice, when you are grieving his Spirit, and perſecuting him in his members, for doing that to which he immediately leads them now, as in the dayes of old; Is not this in effect to ſay, depart from our Nations, we will have none of thy wayes, nor ſhall any under our government, or that will follow our teachings obey thy Spirit if we can ſtop them by our power, is not this to withſtand his appearance, and reſiſt the power that you profeſſe to rule for.

Doe you not read in the Acts of the Apoſtles, what labour and ſuffering they underwent to bring people out of carnall rudiments and ordinances of men, and to bring them to the worſhip in ſpirit and truth alone, both as to time, place, and order; how did they run in hazard of their lives, into Temples, Synagogues, and ſet places of worſhip, to bring them out of Temples made with hands, to worſhip where the Spirit ſhould lead them, without reſpect of places; that ſo the words of the Lord Ieſus might be fulfilled, who had ſaid, *Not in the Temple, nor in the mountaine, but in ſpirit and in truth ſhould the Father be worſhipped*; and did not *Stephen* loſe his life for telling them *that God that made the world dwelt not in Temples made with hands*; *John* 4. 21, 24. *Acts* 7. 48. *Acts* 17. 24.

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an l *Paul* ſuffere l for the ſame teſtimony, and they told them the moſt high God, could not be worſhipped with mens hands, nor carnall things, but *in ſpirit. and in truth*; And how often was they tumulted and beaten, and their bloud ſhed for this teſtimony, againſt the beggerly rudiments, & carnal ordinances of men, both of Iewes, who had their ordinances from the letter, and alſo the Gentiles who followed their cuſtomes, That out of all carnall things they might bring them, to follow God in ſpirit, and therein alone to ſerve him.

And while you profeſſe all this in words, will you be the men that will deny the very ſame in workes, and ſhall you be guiltleſſe, ſhall not both Iewes and Gentiles riſe in Iudgement againſt you, and condemne you, who acts againſt knowledge, Scriptures, and your owne profeſſion? And is it not ſo with you Rulers and Teachers of this generation? what force and cruelty hath been uſed to bring people back to your Idol temples made with hands, there to worſhip and no where elſe, and to repaire them, and to bow to the cuſtomes of men there ſet up, for which there is neither Scriptures nor example; even too many to mention, what impriſoning and tormenting of the ſpirituall worſhippers of the living God, hath there been in theſe laſt dayes for theſe things? what ſufferings have ſome gone through, but for teſtifying againſt theſe traditious carnal, & ſaying the Church muſt be in God, and that every one muſt come to be led by the ſpirit alone in all their whole worſhips, and ſo give the kingdome & lead-

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ing of his people to the leading of Christ that spirit againe, in all things pertaining to worship, life and godlineſſe; hath not this been a dangerous thing in this age to beare this record of God in Christ, or ſo to become his witneſſe? how many have loſt their liberties, their eſtates, and ſome their lives for this teſtimony in word and practiſe, which reconciles to God in all his whole worſhip? and yet the ſame is read and preached, every firſt day among them that doe this to ſuch as live the life thereof for Ieſus ſake; theſe are not the workes of Chriſtians indeed, in the Apoſtles ſence, but of ſuch as know not God, nor the word of reconciliation, have not.

How many have ſuffered in this age, but for reproving ſin in the gate, curſing, pride, lying, and ſwearing; how have ſome been beaten, puld and hailed, and dragg'd through ſtreets and channells, and before Iudgement ſeats, and to priſons, for no other things: how many have wofully ſuffered, but for preaching repetance through ſtreets, towns, and markets, in the name of the Lord, and by the Call of his holy Spirit; How many hundreds have been impriſoned for preaching the everlaſting Goſpel of Jeſus freely, in Townes, Temples, ſtreets and markets, and from houſe to houſe, which was the manner of Gods meſſengers in the name of his Son ever to doe, and for which they ſuffered: How many have had their cloaths rent off their backs, and been ſhamefully beaten till they have been left for dead, and afterward carried to priſon, for but asking a queſtion, or ſpeaking a word in a Steplehouſe, while a

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man hath been ſpeaking things doubtfull, or not true, though this was the way of old, in which the ſervants of Chriſt walked, and by which he gathered the Churches into God in Spirit, and out of falſe worſhips; And it was the manner of the Apoſtles to enter into Synagogues and places of worſhips both of Jewes and Gentiles on their Sabbath dayes, and openly diſpute there with them before their hearers, and then whoſe hearts God touched, left their carnall worſhips and clave to Chriſt in ſpirit, which is now become a greater offence to this generation, then ever it was eyther to Jewes or Gentiles; for I never read that ſimply for ſo diſputing, they either beat them or haled them to priſon, though they went ſometimes three Sabbath dayes together into one Synagogue, yea, the fiery Jews, who was ſet on miſchiefe againſt that way, yet this they could ſuffer in their Synagogue, as is teſtified *Acts* 17. 2. and ſaith the Scriptures, *this was his manner.* And in *Acts* 18. 4. it is ſaid, *he reaſoned in the Synagogue every Sabbath day at Corinth*, where he continued a yeare and ſix months teaching the word of God among them, *verſ.* 11.

Now hath not this been the great offence of theſe dayes, yea, I may ſay the chiefeſt crime which the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuffered for, in this age, and none ſcarce eyther ruler or teacher is able to beare it once, which they could beare a yeare and above, among Iewes and heathens; ſo that this way of Chriſt by which the Churches was gathered & called in the Apoſtles time, is become more abominable in the ſight of thoſe that cals them-

themſelves Chriſtians, then it was eyther to Iewes or heathens; And when neither laws of Iewes, Gentiles, nor heathens, that was made in times of popery, would anſwer their wills againſt this, then have they made new Lawes of their owne againſt this practiſe; which themſelves read, believe and preach; and this we cannot owne, that men ſhould withſtand that in workes which they profeſſe in words, and ſeeke to impoſe it upon others who ſerve God therein by the Spirit of Ieſus, and then call themſelves Chriſtians, and ſay the Scriptures is their rule, who cannot beare it in them that practiſe it in obedience to Chriſt Ieſus.

And this is that we contend for in all our ſufferings and actings, in the ſimplicity of our hearts, that our Lord and Maſter Ieſus Chriſt, may have his *Prerogative Royall* reſtored to him, over his *body*, *the Church*, and every particular member thereof, his *Lordſhip*, and *Maſterſhip*, given to him alone of all his children, from leaſt to the greateſt, and that none elſe force it, or require it from him, but that his *headſhip alone over his Church*, his leadings, and the ſeate of his Iudgements, in every redeemed ſoule and conſcience, may be reſtored to him, and that he may have both name and authority therein, and that none may preſume to take his authority to themſelves, while they give him faire words, & call him, *Lord, Lord*, but neither doe his will in their own conſciences, nor ſuffer them that would: This I ſay, is that we ſeeke now at the hands of men that are called Chriſtians, which by his own bloud, and by the precious ſufferings

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in many of his obedient ſervants of old, he once purchaſed out of the hands of the old perſecuters, and gave it as inheritance to his ſeed after him to all generations, to call him *head and Lord in them and over them*, in all things pertaining to worſhip and conſcience, as the Scripture of truth is evident.

And this we ſay in his behalfe, and in the power of his name, where ever he ſends us, that though his adverſary of old, hath taken this his purchaſed poſſeſſion from him, and now ſits where he ought not, commanding in conſcience, over his ſubjects and creatures, compelling and forceing, to obey his traditions and law from a carnall precept, or tradition of men, yet we ſay the right is Chriſts alone, and the whole kingdome of God in every conſcience he hath purchaſed with his bloud and great ſufferings of old; therefore we ſay to all ſorts of people, looke to him and walke in his light, all that looke to be ſaved; for we ſay he is *a great and mighty one*, who though he have been as one gone a far jorney for a time, yet he is returned, and hath ſeene how his deare ſervants have been entreated, and his little children ſpoyled of their birth-right, and caſt out of their purchaſed poſſeſſion, and heavenly kingdome, and now ſtrangers rule over their tender conſciences, and ſeeke to defile them, with adultery and Idolatry, which is againſt their ſpirituall birth, and breathing, and himſelfe robbed of his authoritie, and Scepter of his everlaſting Dominion, for which he will

*Jer.*10.2,3.

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tread nations in his wrath, and people in his hot displeasure, even for *Zions sake the Citie of his glory*, and he will spoyle the spoyler, and lead Captivity captive, and so will he make way for his inheritance, to come into their habitation of rest.

And this we say to all people, *GIVE VP, feare God, and give glory to his Name, for the houre of his Judgements is come*, and he will have dominion as of old, and his purchased possession as in ancient dayes; But especially to you who are called Christians, and mention his name, and call him Lord, and profess the Scriptures, in words, which testifies of him, his sufferings, and his purchase through bloud, and the eternall anoynting of the Father, sworne unto him, by an everlasting Covenant, that he alone shall sit on the spirituall throne, over the house of *David* for ever, that he may with his spirituall leadings gather the out-casts of *Israel*, and present to God all the precious among the people; have you not read you professing Priests and Rulers, that it is he alone *that is the light of the world*, and *Isa.* 55. 4. that God hath given him for a witnesse to the people, a leader and commander; that its he thats appointed for *a light to them that sit in* *Luke* 1. 79. *darkness, and in the shadow of death*, to guide their feete in the way of peace; did God ever set any at the right hand of power but he alone, that he might make his foes his foot-stoole; of whom he saith when he brings him into the world, *Let all the Angels of God wor-* *Heb.* 1. 6. *ship him*; have you not read that its he alone that purgeth the Conscience from dead

works, And will you not ſuffer him to reigne and governe therein; hath not he quickned every living ſoule, and created anew, every free Spirit, and would you take and keepe the kingdome therein, out of his hand, and rule there for another, or your ſelves, with force and cruelty; Is not this he for whom the Sabbath was made, and all the ordinances under heaven ſpeakes his dominion? And will you now read this and profeſſe, and withſtand him in the Conſciences of his tender people and deny him to rule in his Church alone? have you not read what God hath ſaid of him, and his enemies in the ſecond Pſalme; nay, are not all the Scriptures his, and teſtifie to him alone, as *head over all*, and ruler in all his Saints? And as you have heard, read, and profeſſed, his dominion more then heathens, and yet goe on to keepe it from him; ſo to you is his firſt appearance, to ſeeke his owne of you; And if you perſiſt to deny him, its you muſt drinke the Cup firſt, that the heathens may heare and feare his name from farre, and his riſing appeare to all the ends of the world, that its he alone who is from everlaſting at whoſe name every knee muſt bow, and tongue confeſſe, to the right of his inheritance.

And this further I lay before you people of this Nation, who have long been crying for peace and ſettlement in the Nations, and in your Religion, and you cry out of ſo many diviſions, and ſo many religions; I ſay to you all, how ſhould you be otherwiſe, when you will not come to the *one religion that is*

of

of God, and was in the beginning with God, and brought forth in time by Ieſus Chriſt, for the bringing all into God againe, and reconciling all ſorts of ſcattered people, who are ſcattered in the imaginations and cuſtomes of carnall ſpirited men, from God the one good thing, into many things, rudiments, and traditions, wherein you can neither be reconciled to God, nor one to another; for how is it like that ever that religion can reconcile to God, which ſets you a killing one another to uphold it? are you like to obtaine peace in that Spirit which in your hearts is the cauſe of enmity and warre, or obtaine unitie from that roote, which hath thus ſcattered you in its fruits and off ſpring; This is like the falſe Prophets of old, who would *bite with their teeth, and cry peace.* *Micah. 3. 11*

Nay this is not the way of ſettlement or laſting peace, *THAT*, you muſt have in returning; and making peace with the Spirit of Jeſus, you muſt kiſſe the Son and ſo make peace, for this hath been ſeene concerning you of theſe Nations, that if you owne not the light of Chriſt in ſpirit and truth, that he may lead you out of theſe many things which are not of God, and reconcile you to God in ſpirit and truth, there to worſhip him alone who is a Spirit, you will ere long be in bloud, eyther amongſt your ſelves, one againſt another, or elſe in the bloud of the innocent Lambs of Chriſt, which will not be for your peace with God, for he that hath letted your peace and ſettlement, is not yet taken away, nor his power, who is that old

bloud-sucker, and divider of Nations, people, and tongues, about faith and religions, and with which a fire hath often been kindled; nor can his power be stopped, but by the Spirit of the *Lambe of God*, which takes away sin, and breakes downe the wall of separation, which is made about ordinances, litterall, ceremoniall, and traditionall, which can never cease, but as men turne to the Spirit of the Lord Iesus, That with the light of peace and truth you may be led into peace, truth, and unity, that wrath may be done away, and the ground thereof, and you and your religion may be setled on the foundation of truth, *Christ Jesus the chiefe corner stone*, and not upon, dayes, times, meats, drinks, and apparell, and other things which will perish with the using, and so will they that worship and not in the leadings of Christ alone and God will shake the Idolls of peoples minds, and all the glory of flesh, that he alone may be exalted in the earth, as he is in heaven.

*Col.*2.14, 15 16, 17, 20, 21, 22. *Heb.* 10. 11.

So if you will have peace you must come to the Son of peace, and if you will have establishment, you must come to the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles of God; for I say, many have been about to build a house for God to dwell in, with carnall things, and rudiments, and this they would bind him to, (& his people,) who is a Spirit, and his house must be built of spirituall men and women, who like living stones must grow up in his owne light and vertue into a holy temple in the Lord; In which you must be builded together

gether for an habitation of God through the Spirit, *Eph.* 2. 20, 21, 22. And this is Gods houſe built by Chriſt alone, with that which is elect and precious, not with gold and garments, or obſervations of periſhing things, but with redeemed ſoules by the bloud of Ieſus out of their vaine converſation, and gathered into the Spirit of truth and life, and power, to worſhip God who is a Spirit, in ſpirit & truth; and this is Gods houſe at this day, which was his houſe in the Apoſtles dayes, *who dwells not in Temples made with hands*, as ſaith the Apoſtles, nor with mens hands is worſhipped, but with him thats poore in ſpirit, *and of a broken and contrite heart, to him will I looke*. ſaith the Lord, *and there will I dwell*; And the bodyes of his holy people are the Temples of the living God, as he hath ſaid, *I will dwell in them, and walke in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*, 2 Cor. 6. 16. And untill you come to this building of God in your ſelves, God will not dwell with you in peace, but all your buildings will he cõfound, and not accept your ſacrifice, and then the Devill will enrage you againſt Gods houſe and ſpirituall building, even his poore deſpiſed people them to deſtroy; like *Cain* when his ſacrifice was not accepted in his owne will. *Iſa.* 66. 2.

But if you turne to the Lord who is that Spirit, then will he cauſe his light to ſhine in your hearts, to give you an heavenly underſtanding, and he will put his Spirit in your inward parts, and fill you with heavenly

venly power, and will let you see the lively Image of truth and peace; and he will take away the vaile of the Covering that is spead over all Nations, from which arises all their carnall comprehensions, and carnall worships of the invisible spirituall God, and he will also swallow up death in victory, which now worketh in the Nations, to kill one another about religion and worship, without spirit and life, so will you come to be taught his true worship, who is a Spirit, and become true worshippers in Spirit, and so grow up in his knowledge, and he will owne your worship, whom as yet you have *neither heard his voyce at any time, nor seene his shape.* And Christ saith of such worshippers, *Ye worship you know not what*; but the true worshippers worship in faith, and know what they worship, *and such the Father is now seeking to worship him*, saith Christ Iesus, *John* 4. 22, 23, 24.

Isa. 25. 7,8.

2 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17, 18.

John 5 37.

And this is the thing oh *England*, that concernes thy peace with thy God in this thy day, who art Combred with many things, about Christ and worship, but neglects the one thing needfull, for thy everlasting peace and establishment, and to bring thee into that worship of Spirit, without which God cannot accept thee, and that religion which is pure, and undefiled in the sight of God, which will keepe thee unspotted in the world, which till thou turne to, thou wilt be working against the Spirit of God, through the darkneſse of enmity,

Luke 19.42.

Luke 10.41, 42.

James 1.27.

mity, that is in thee, and he will certainly worke againſt thee, except thou repent.

THE END.

J. N.

R. H.